

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the above-identified application in view of the amendments above and the remarks following is respectfully requested

Claims 16-35 are in this case. Claims 16-35 have been rejected under § 102(b) or § 103(a). Independent claim 1 and dependent claims 23, 24, 30 and 34 have been amended. Claims 20-22 have been canceled. New independent claims 36 and 37 have been added.

Interview and Change of Attorney

The Applicant is filing, contemporaneously with this response, a new power of attorney to the undersigned, and a revocation of all former powers of attorney. Accordingly, the attorney docket number for this case has changed, and is now 3719/1. The Applicant apologizes for any inconvenience caused, and thanks the Examiner for his cooperation in updating these details.

The Applicant notes that a telephone interview was conducted by the previous attorney of record on August 4, 2006. The content of that interview appears in the Examiner's interview summary mailed August 8, 2006.

§ 102(b) & § 103(a) Rejections

The Examiner has rejected claims 16-18 and 20-22 under § 102(b) as being anticipated by Chao (US 5697668). The Examiner has also rejected claims 16-25, 27 and 29-32 under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Baru (WO 99/04670) in view of Clausen et al. (US 4238097). Finally, the Examiner has rejected claims 26, 28 and 33-35 under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Baru in view of Clausen et al., and further in view of Mesinger (US 3606383). The Examiner's rejections are respectfully traversed.

As acknowledged by the Examiner in the aforementioned interview summary, none of the art of record teaches a device for connection to the central column of an office chair between the base and the seat. The examiner and, more surprisingly, the previous attorney of record seemed to be unsure at the time of the interview whether this feature was disclosed in the specification.

The Applicant wishes to point out that the specification as originally filed explicitly states (page 11, lines 22-24):

[There is shown ...] **an embodiment of the present invention comprising an appendage for retrofitting office chair 1 around central column below seats 2 and above feet assembly 3 thereof.** [emphasis added]

Thus, the application clearly states that the locking mechanism, described thereafter in more detail, attaches to the central column between the seat and the feet assembly (base) of the office chair. No such configuration is taught, or in any way implied, by the cited references when considered alone or in combination. This configuration provides profound advantages over the prior art, allowing use of an unmodified office chair of the user's choice together with the appendage of the present invention to provide a computer workstation.

Furthermore, as inherent to the word "appendage" used to define the present invention, the device of the present invention is used as an "add-on" to an office chair, without requiring any destructive modification or disassembly of the chair.

While continuing to traverse the Examiner's rejections, the Applicant has, in order to expedite the prosecution, chosen to amend independent claim 16 in order to clarify and emphasize the crucial distinctions between the device of the present invention and the devices of the patents cited by the Examiner. Specifically, claim 1 has been amended to introduce the locking mechanism of now canceled dependent claim 20, as well as further clarifying that the locking mechanism is configured for

locking the seat connector onto the central support column of the chair below the seat and above the feet assembly.

Parenthetically, the Examiner noted that the language "locking means" did not invoke § 112, sixth paragraph. The Applicant agrees with this assessment, since it was the Applicant's intention to include within the scope of the claim any and all locking mechanisms capable of satisfying the remaining explicit limitations of the claims. In order to make this clearer, the term "locking means" has been replaced by "locking mechanism".

Dependent claims 20-22 have been canceled and dependent claims 23, 24, 30 and 34 amended to render them consistent with the amendments to claim 16.

New independent claim 36 recites a computer workstation (system) including both a chair and an appendage similar to that defined in claim 16. Claims 36 and 16 are interrelated as a combination and a sub-combination wherein the combination requires all features of the subcombination. Accordingly, the Applicant believes that claim 36 can be fairly examined together with claim 16.

New independent claim 37 recites a method for adapting a chair by attachment of an appendage similar to that defined in claim 16. Claims 37 and claim 16 are interrelated as a product and process of using wherein the process as recited requires all features of the product. Accordingly, the Applicant believes that claim 37 can be fairly examined together with claim 16.

Support for these amendments can be found in the specification. Specifically, support for the locking mechanism locking the seat connector onto the central support column of the chair below the seat and above the feet assembly can be found on page 11, lines 22-24.

Amended independent claims 16, 36 and 37 now feature language which makes it absolutely clear that the present invention provides an appendage and corresponding system and method in which the appendage is attached to the central column of an office chair between the seat and the base and supports a monitor. The Applicant believes that the amendment of the claims completely overcomes the Examiner's rejections on § 102(b) and § 103(a) grounds

In view of the above amendments and remarks it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 16, 36 and 37, and hence also dependent claims 17-19 and 23-35, are in condition for allowance. Prompt notice of allowance is respectfully and earnestly solicited

Respectfully submitted,



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